

Message Text

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AMCONSUL MONTREAL

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 13556

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, FR, CA
SUBJECT: FRENCH SOCIALISTS (PS) AND THE QUEBEC ISSUE

REF: PARIS 13413

SUMMARY. PS INTERNATIONAL STAFF VOCIFEROUSLY DENIED STORY BEING PUT OUT BY QUEBEC DELEGATION. NOTING THAT MORIN VISIT WAS A POLITICAL HOT POTATO, PS SAID THAT IT WAS DISAPPOINTED BY CONTINUING QUEBEC DELEGATION "TURN-ING OF THE RUMOR MILL" AND WOULD BE TAKING STEPS TO END THIS. FURTHER, PS SAID THAT NEITHER MITTERRAND NOR PONTILLON HAD GIVEN ANY ASSURANCE OF VISIT TO QUEBEC IN ANY CONTEXT OTHER THAN THAT OF A FLYING VISIT AT THE END OF THE NOVEMBER, 1978 SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS IN VANCOUVER. END SUMMARY.

1. "THERE WAS NO LUNCH": PS DENIES THAT ANY JOINT MEETING -- LUNCH, DINNER OR OTHERWISE -- WAS HELD BETWEEN MORIN AND TOP PS LEADERS (SEE PARA 1 REFTEL) AND HAS OFFERED TO PRODUCE TRAVEL SCHEDULES FOR PONTILLON AND ROCARD TO PROVE THIS POINT. FURTHER CONVER-
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SATION PRODUCED DISTINCT IMPRESSION THAT PS FOUND MORIN'S PRESENCE IN FRANCE AN EMBARRASSMENT WHICH WAS EXACERBATED BY HIS "COURTSHIP WITH CHIRAC." THE REFERENCE TO CHIRAC'S SEMI-ENDORSEMENT OF "QUEBECIZATION", PS NOTED, WAS NECESSARILY VAGUE IN THAT CHIRAC IS QUOTED BY ONE NEWSPAPER AS HAVING AGREED WITH THE POSITIONS ESPOUSED BY MORIN AND BY ANOTHER AS HAVING NOTED

THESE POSITIONS.

2. "THERE WILL BE NO VISITS AFTER THE PONTILLON AND MITTERRAND TRIPS": PS SAYS THAT NEITHER MITTERRAND NOR PONTILLON HAS ANY PLANS TO VISIT QUEBEC AFTER THEIR RESPECTIVE US TRIPS. THE ONLY POSSIBILITY CURRENTLY PLANNED IS A FLYING STOP IN MONTREAL BY BOTH MEN AFTER THE NOVEMBER, 1978 VANCOUVER CONGRESS OF THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL. THIS STOP, THE PS INFORMED US, MIGHT BE PARALLELED BY A STOP IN NEW YORK TO SEE LEADERS OF THE AMERICAN SOCIALIST PARTY. BUT THE IDEA OF A SEPARATE TRIP, WHILE OBVIOUSLY ENVISAGED BY MORIN AS SOMETHING WHICH MIGHT HAPPEN THIS YEAR, IS FOR THE MOMENT BEING EXCLUDED.

3. "MORIN PLAYED LOUSY POLITICS": IN THAT PITHY PHRASE, PS STAFFER THAUVIN SUMMED UP HIS VIEWS OF THE REASONS FOR THE FAILURE OF THE QUEBEC DELEGATION AND THE PS TO COME TO AN AGREEMENT OVER A MEETING. MORIN HAD WRITTEN TO MITTERRAND OVER A MONTH AGO SUGGESTING A LUNCH; MITTERRAND HAD AGREED IN PRINCIPLE. BY THE TIME MORIN ARRIVED -- AND THE PS SUGGESTS THAT HIS SEEMING INEPTITUDE WAS A RESULT OF ELYSEE PRESSURE -- HIS STAFF WAS SUGGESTING THAT MEETINGS BE HELD BETWEEN MITTERRAND, PONTILLON AND MEMBERS OF MORIN'S STAFF. THIS THE PS TURNED DOWN.
GAMMON

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